

enormous old Marri tree. It all seemed to happen in an instant, the Brush looked as if it was going to crash straight into the tree, but at the very last instant it leaped sideways to the left and avoided it. Not so the dog, with his eyes glued to the Brush and about to pounce on it, he hurtled into the tree and was killed instantly. On examination he was found to have a broken neck and one of his front legs was also broken.

The interesting thing about this incident is, I think, that the dog died as the result of a planned or predetermined action by the little Brush Wallaby. Doubtless this tactic had been acquired and passed on when trying to shake off pursuit by hunting dingoes which even at that time were very numerous along the Blackwood.

For the record the following mammals were numerous and frequently seen along the Blackwood at that time:—

Grey Kangaroo, *Macropus fuliginosus*

Brush or Black-gloved Wallaby, *Macropus irma*.

Quokka, *Setonix brachyurus*.

Woylie, *Bettongia penicillata*.

Ringtail Possum, *Pseudocheirus peregrinus*.

Brush-tailed Possum, *Trichosurus vulpecula*.

Dingo, *Canis familiaris*.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Long-necked Tortoises in the City of Perth.—It should be recorded, while still remembered, that, until the Perth foreshore was lost to reclamation, Long-necked Tortoises (*Chelodina longicollis*), may still have sought egg-laying sites in the city area. I can recall, as late as about 1950, these creatures heading determinedly up William Street. If diverted up a lane they were temporarily confused but always tried to find a route roughly northward. Most must have perished on the roads or become hopelessly lost in city lanes.

Perth, north of the Swan River, was a city of lakes and swamps when it was founded in 1829. Subsequently most disappeared with development (see the account by D. L. Serventy, *Emu*, 47, 1948: 241), but while they existed the area must have been a haven to freshwater tortoises. One interesting near-city place where they still survive is Shenton Park Lake and the animals make their way to the gardens of neighbouring residents to lay their eggs. The annual crossing of Herbert Road for this purpose has become something of a scientific tourist attraction and is occasionally featured in the press. The Subiaco City Council now erects road-signs during this period warning motorists to avoid running over the tortoises.

—DAVID HUTCHISON, Wembley Downs.

Freckled Duck at Yanchep.—On 31st January, 1971, I was called to Loch McNess, Yanchep National Park, to identify a strange duck, but unfortunately by the time I arrived it had swum out too far to pick up with my field glasses. On the 27th February, Mr. John Elphinstone, a ranger in the park, and a member of the R.A.O.U., reported with great excitement that there was a Freckled Duck, (*Stictonetta naevosa*) amongst the Black Duck on the bank in the feed area. We returned together and there he was, quite unmistakable, and remarkably tame for a duck of a species usually regarded as shy. Dr. Tom Spence, who came up that afternoon, considered this duck to be an immature male. He was most reluctant to fly and had to be driven off the water by Tom in a boat, when he only flew a short distance. It is possible that this duck, he was identified as being of the same species as that reported on the 31st January, was a pricked bird, that had taken shelter at Yanchep to recover after the shooting season. He stayed with us, spending most of the day

with the Black Duck near the feed area on Loch McNess and camping on one of the islands at night, until 28th March. Since that date I have two unconfirmed sighting reports.

—PETER CONGREVE, Yanehep National Park.

Occurrence of Bathurst Burr in Virgin Country.—In the latter part of September, 1970, after heavy rains, I took a trip into virgin bush country with friends. We found many common plants flowering, and the common pink everlastings were particularly tall, well-grown and in flower. I found a small rusty tin and dug up an everlasting plant to take home with me. I noticed a small strong-looking little plant in the soil with the everlasting I had dug up. It was about 1 inch high, with two strong little leaves.

I watered the little plant every day. It was quite attractive and many small spines became apparent up the stalk. It continued to thrive during the summer and small prickly oval-shaped burrs began to form. The spines on the stalk were numerous and at least one inch in length, and very sharp. Towards the end of May, 1971, the light green burrs turned brown and started to fall. The plant had now grown to 8 or 9in. high with at least a dozen burrs the size of a pea, but of oval shape. I uprooted it and sent it to Mr. R. D. Royce, Officer-in-Charge of the Botany Branch, Department of Agriculture, South Perth. He identified it as Bathurst Burr, *Xanthium spinosum*. He thought it was a most interesting occurrence, showing how a serious weed of this nature can become established in virgin bush. The locality where the plant was found is not far from a farm where sheep are grazing.

—(Mrs.) M. B. MILLS, Merredin.

First Record of the Garganey in Western Australia.—As this is the first reported sighting of the Garganey (*Anas querquedula*) in Western Australia and there are only three records of the species in the whole of Australia, it is prudent to qualify myself as an observer first. *Anas querquedula*, the Garganey, or Blue-winged Teal as it is known to me in South India, was by far the most common duck visiting the dams and lakes of Mysore, and formed a large part of the duck shooter's bag during the season. The birds there were in eclipse plumage and I must have seen thousands and handled some hundreds.

On 19th March, 1971, I was watching the duck on the southern end of the lake front of Loch McNess, Yanehep National Park, when I noticed a stranger amongst a small party of Grey Teal swimming on the lake. The bird had a definite whitish superciliary stripe, the head was flatter over the crown, and the colour appeared darker. As I watched another teal joined the group and this time there could be no mistake, he was a male Garganey in full breeding plumage. A broad white superciliary stripe ran from in front of the eye down the sides of the nape. The crown of the head was dark, the sides of the face and neck were rich chocolate chestnut merging on the chest into brown, the abdomen appeared white, sharply demarcated by the brown chest. With the bird floating on the water, the wing coverts and flanks were seen to be grey, giving the mid section a light grey appearance to the water line. The scapulars, black with broadly white centres, fell like ornamental plumes diagonally across the flanks. In flight both birds exhibited a broad grey wing bar with a white stripe edging it, before the dark colour of the flight quills. These ducks stayed about half an hour, before flying off together to the top lake, Yanehep.

On the 30th, John Elphinstone was with me, when they again came in. Again it was the female that first caught our eye, to be joined by the resplendent male. While watching they swam in to about 30 yards and there could be no mistake of their identity. Again they only stayed a short time. Unfortunately Mr. C. F. H. Jenkins, who visited the park on the 29th, and Drs. D. L. Serventy and T. Spence, who spent the morning of the 30th, in a difficult passage to the open water of Lake Yanehep, did not get a sight of these ducks.

—PETER CONGREVE, Yanehep National Park.